



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/456,670	12/09/1999	YOICHI SHIMAZAWA	SAOL.P0107US	6754
7590	05/05/2004		EXAMINER	
			TRAN, DOUGLAS Q	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2624	12
DATE MAILED: 05/05/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/456,670	SHIMAZAWA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Douglas Q. Tran	2624

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 February 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 11-15 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 11-15 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>11</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 11-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Yamamoto et al. (US Patent No. 5,652,830) and Ikenoue et al. (US Patent No. 5,671,277).

As to claim 11, Yamamoto teaches an image forming apparatus (i.e., a printer in fig. 18) for forming an image based on image data inputted from an arbitrary image output apparatus (i.e., a host computer in fig. 18; col. 30, lines 13-21: one of printers receives the print data from one of host computers and forms an image in steps of S108 and S119 in fig. 20), the image forming apparatus performing:

a first interface (the input section 106 in fig. 18 and step of S114 in fig. 20) to which image data is inputted along with identification information which identifies an image output apparatus (the input section 106 “col. 31, line 63 to col. 32, line 10”);

a second interface (108 in fig. 18) to which image data (i.e., confidential print data) with identification information which identifies an image output apparatus (host machine numbers, col. 30, lines 52-57),

a confirming process for a first identification information (i.e., an ID code is entered and matched with the ID code) in relation to the image data inputted from the first interface is performed (col. 31, lines 8-11; and also with host machine identification “col. 30, lines 52-56”, i.e., one of the host machines in fig. 18), (it is noted that, col. 31, lines 28-29 and 63-67, a confirming process whether an ID code is entered through the ID input section and whether the entered ID code is matched with the ID code stored in the memory 102. The ID code has been inputted together with host machine identification and print data “col. 30, lines 52-56 and col. 31, lines 8-11” are sent to a printer for print out. The host machine number would be also considered as identification information of the output apparatus);

process for an image formation based on the inputted image data is inhibited in a case where identification information is not confirmed in the first confirming process for the identification information (it is noted that because the printer performs the printing out for the confidential print data send from the host machine, the printer would perform to form an image based on image data only when the printer receives the ID code has been inputted together with image data from the host machine “col. 31, lines 8-11”; and the process further for forming the image only occurs when the ID code is confirmed at the input section 106 “col. 31, line 63 to col. 32, line 10”).

Yamamoto does not teach the confidential image data from the second interface containing identification pattern which identifies an image output apparatus in a predetermined position is inputted so that a process for an image formation based on the inputted image data is inhibited in a case where identification information is not confirmed in each confirming process for the identification information.

Ikenoue teaches the confidential image data from the second interface (1 in fig. 13) containing identification pattern (i.e., an image data embedded additional data "col. 7, lines 5-9 and col. 9, lines 39-43) which identifies an image output apparatus in a predetermined position is inputted (col. 6, table 1 shows additional data includes identification information such as user name, password number, output device "col. 6, lines 2-3 and col. 5, lines 29-34") so that a process for an image formation based on the inputted image data is inhibited in a case where identification information is not confirmed in each confirming process for the identification information (col. 5, lines 29-39).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the confirming process in Yamamoto for confirming whether the identification information of an output apparatus is contained in the inputted image data at the second interface as taught by Ikenoue. The suggestion for modifying the printing system of Yamamoto can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art as set forth above by Ikenoue because the modified printing system of Yamamoto would be flexible and faster but also confidential by performing to form an image data only when the identification information of the host computer in the network is determined from the judging process.

As to claim 12, Yamamoto and Ikenoue disclose every feature discussed in claim 11, and Yamamoto further teaches the confirming process for the first identification is performed to confirm whether or not identification information is inputted along with the image data for a predetermined period of time (col. 8, lines 41-48), and the confirming process for the second identification information is performed to confirm whether or not an identification pattern exists in a predetermined position of the image data (col. 7, lines 33-65 as taught by Ikenoue).

As to claim 13, Yamamoto and Ikenoue disclose every feature discussed in claim , and Ikenoue further teaches the confirming process for the second id information further includes a process for confirming whether or not the id information is inputted separately from the image data, in a case where the id pattern does not exist in a predetermined position of the image data (it is noted that Ikenoue teaches the printing system processes not only for additional data is embedded in the image data, but also for the conventional printing system in which the additional data is inputted together with the image data).

As to claim 14, Yamamoto and Ikenoue disclose every feature discussed in claim 11, and Ikenoue further teaches the image forming process is performed by adding an image of the identification pattern which is created based on the identification information which is confirmed in the confirming process for the first identification information to the image data which is inputted from the first interface (col. 9, line 67 to col. 10, line 8).

As to claim 15, Yamamoto and Ikenoue disclose every feature discussed in claim 14, and Ikenoue further teaches the image of identification pattern indicating identification information which specifies the image forming apparatus itself is created, and the image formation is performed so as to add the image of formation is performed so as to add the image of id pattern to the image data which is inputted from the first interface (col. 9, line 67 to col. 10, line 8).

Response to Arguments and Amendment

Applicant's arguments filed 2/17/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant asserted that "there is no teaching or suggestion of the features of claims". In reply, Yamamoto teaches a first interface (the input section 106 in fig. 18 and step of S114 in fig. 20) to which image data is inputted along with identification information which identifies an image output apparatus (the input section 106 "col. 31, line 63 to col. 32, line 10"); a second interface (108 in fig. 18) to which image data (i.e., confidential print data) with identification information which identifies an image output apparatus (host machine numbers, col. 30, lines 52-57),

a confirming process for a first identification information (i.e., an ID code is entered and matched with the ID code) in relation to the image data inputted from the first interface is performed (col. 31, lines 8-11; and also with host machine identification "col. 30, lines 52-56", i.e., one of the host machines in fig. 18), (it is noted that, col. 31, lines 28-29 and 63-67, a confirming process whether an ID code is entered through the ID input section and whether the entered ID code is matched with the ID code stored in the memory 102. The ID code has been inputted together with host machine identification and print data "col. 30, lines 52-56 and col. 31, lines 8-11" are sent to a printer for print out. The host machine number would be also considered as identification information of the output apparatus);

process for an image formation based on the inputted image data is inhibited in a case where identification information is not confirmed in the first confirming process for the identification information (it is noted that because the printer performs the printing out for the confidential print data send from the host machine, the printer would perform to form an image based on image data only when the printer receives the ID code has been inputted together with image data from the host machine "col. 31, lines 8-11"; and the process further for forming the

Art Unit: 2624

image only occurs when the ID code is confirmed at the input section 106 "col. 31, line 63 to col. 32, line 10").

Yamamoto does not teach the confidential image data from the second interface containing identification pattern which identifies an image output apparatus in a predetermined position is inputted so that a process for an image formation based on the inputted image data is inhibited in a case where identification information is not confirmed in each confirming process for the identification information.

Ikenoue teaches the confidential image data from the second interface (1 in fig. 13) containing identification pattern (i.e., an image data embedded additional data "col. 7, lines 5-9 and col. 9, lines 39-43) which identifies an image output apparatus in a predetermined position is inputted (col. 6, table 1 shows additional data includes identification information such as user name, password number, output device "col. 6, lines 2-3 and col. 5, lines 29-34") so that a process for an image formation based on the inputted image data is inhibited in a case where identification information is not confirmed in each confirming process for the identification information (col. 5, lines 29-39).

For the above reasons, it is believed that the cited prior art fully discloses the claimed invention and the rejection stand.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Douglas Q. Tran whose telephone number is (703) 305-4857 or E-mail address is Douglas.tran@uspto.gov.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

Douglas Q. Tran
May 01, 2004

Douglas Q. Tran

Gabriel Garcia

GABRIEL GARCIA
PRIMARY EXAMINER